

State of Delaware Department of Education

Delaware Educator Data System Request for Information

Request No: DOE 2018-23

Issue date: May 31, 2018

Response due: July 5, 2018

Request for Information – RFI No. DOE 2018-23

ALL VENDORS:

The enclosed packet contains a "REQUEST FOR INFORMATION (RFI)" for the provision of products and services to replace the current Delaware Department of Education's **Delaware Educator Data System (DEEDS)**.

In order for your response to be considered, the Request for Information response shall be executed completely and returned in a sealed envelope **clearly displaying the RFI number and Vendor name by 2:00pm (Local Time) on July 5, 2018**.

Responses must be mailed to:

Delaware Department of Education, Finance Office
Attn: Meaghan Brennan
401 Federal Street, Suite 2
Dover, DE 19901

Should you need additional information, please call Meaghan Brennan at (302) 735-4170 or email Meaghan.Brennan@DOE.k12.de.us

INTRODUCTION

RFI Designated Contact

All requests, questions, or other communications about this RFI must be made in writing to the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE). Address all communications to the person listed below; communications made to other State of Delaware personnel or attempts to ask questions by phone or in person will not be allowed or recognized as valid. Vendors shall rely only on written statements issued by the RFI designated contact.

Meaghan Brennan
Delaware Department of Education, Finance Office
401 Federal Street, Suite 2
Dover, DE 19901 or
Meaghan.Brennan@DOE.k12.de.us

To ensure that written requests are received and answered in a timely manner, electronic mail (e-mail) correspondence is acceptable, but other forms of delivery, such as postal and courier services can also be used.

Contact with State Employee

Direct contact with State of Delaware employees other than the DDOE Designated Contact regarding this RFI is expressly prohibited without prior consent. Vendors directly contacting State of Delaware employees risk elimination of their response from further consideration. Exceptions exist only for organizations currently doing business in the DDOE who require contact in the normal course of doing that business.

RFI Obligation

The RFI is a request for information only, and is not a solicitation to provide goods and services to the DDOE. There will be no contract awarded because of this RFI. Nothing in the Vendor Information

Packages, or in DDOE's remarks or responses to the Vendor Information Packages or any individual Vendor, will be considered binding for a future contract.

Confidentiality

All information included in this RFI is confidential and only for the recipient's knowledge. No information included in this document or in discussions connected to it may be disclosed to any other party.

Ownership of Materials

Ownership of all documentary material originated and prepared for DDOE pursuant to this RFI shall belong exclusively to DDOE; therefore, any and all documents submitted may be returned only at the option of DDOE. DDOE reserves the right to use any and all information contained in a Vendor Information Package to the extent permitted by law.

Vendor Ethics and Integrity

The Vendor is obligated to meet high standards of ethics and integrity in order to be considered a qualified Vendor by DDOE. These standards can be violated according to the conditions identified below:

- The Vendor and employees shall not offer or give any gift, gratuity, favor, entertainment, loan, or any other thing of material monetary value to any DDOE employee.
- The Vendor and employees shall take no action to create an unfair, unethical or illegal competitive advantage for itself or others.

Costs Associated with Submission

Neither DDOE nor the State of Delaware shall be liable for any of the costs incurred by a Vendor in preparing or submitting a Vendor Information Package, including, but not limited to preparation, copying, postage and delivery fees, and expenses associated with any demonstrations or presentations which may be offered or accepted as a result of the RFI. Each Vendor Information Package should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straightforward, concise description of the Vendor's ability. Emphasis should be on completeness and clarity of content.

Disclosure of Vendor Information Package Contents

The State of Delaware is a public agency as defined by State law and, as such, it is subject to the Delaware Freedom of Information Act, 29 Del. C. Ch. 100. Under the law, all State of Delaware records are public records (unless otherwise declared by law to be confidential) and are subject to inspection and copying by any person.

All information submitted by a Vendor may be treated as public information by DDOE unless the Vendor properly requests that information be treated as confidential or proprietary at the time of submitting the Vendor Information Package. Vendors are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the relevant laws and administrative rules governing the release of information by DOE to the public.

Any Vendor Information Package that contains information that the Vendor wishes to remain confidential must submit the "confidential" information in a separate, sealed envelope labeled "Proprietary Information". The envelope must contain a letter from the Vendor's legal counsel describing the documents in the envelope, representing in good faith that the information in each document is not a "public record" as defined by 29 Del. C sec. 10002(d), and briefly stating the reasons that each document meets the said definitions.

Vendor Standing for any Subsequent RFP

An RFI response is not mandatory for a Vendor to later receive an RFP and to bid on such requests. Nonetheless, as a result of the RFI submission, Vendors may jeopardize their qualifications to receive an RFP and participate in the State's bidding process if the Vendor furnishes any statement, representation, warranty, or certification in connection with this RFI or a contract resulting from an RFP that is materially false.

RFI QUESTION AND ANSWER PROCESS

The DDOE will allow written requests for clarification of the RFI. All RFI questions shall be received no later than June 14, 2018. All questions should be posted on DDOE's website at:

<https://doeapppublic01.doe.k12.de.us/BidManagementPublic/#home>

All questions will be consolidated into a single set of responses and posted on both DDOE's website, as well as the State's website at www.bids.delaware.gov by June 20, 2018. Vendor names will be removed from questions in the responses released. Questions should be submitted in the following format.

Deviations from this format will not be accepted. Responses will not contain vendor information. Questions must be submitted in the following format.

Section designation

Page number

Text needing clarification.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

The Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) is planning to issue an RFP in fall 2018 to obtain an application to replace the current Delaware Educator Data System (DEEDS) and Delaware First Professional Development System for Early Childhood (DPEC).

This procurement will be used to create a new application or modify an existing system to replace the current system that will:

- Allow the DDOE, Local Education Authorities (LEAs), Charter Schools, Office of Child Care Licensing (OCCL), Delaware Institutes of Higher Education (IHEs), and educators the ability to view and manage educator data for individuals working from birth to Adult Education, including:
 - Educator application portal which guides educators towards licensure and certification requirements and data submission
 - Capture and store educator data electronically or scanned, when input by the educator, DDOE, or outside entities such as IHEs
 - Maintain a chronological action log regarding all access of and modification to an educator's record
 - Issue three (3) levels of Licenses for PK-12 educators (Initial, Continuing, and Advanced)
 - Issue three (3) levels of Certificates (Standard, Emergency, Certificate of Eligibility)
 - Issue six (6) levels of Early Childhood Certificates (Intern, Assistant Teacher, Teacher, Curriculum Coordinator without a degree, Curriculum Coordinator with a degree, and Administrator)
 - Issue four (4) levels of School Age Center Certificates (School-Age Administrator, School-Age Site Coordinator, School-Age Site Assistant, School-Age Intern)
 - Manage rules to inform processing of licenses, certificates, permits, etc.
 - Store all data relevant to State mentoring process across a maximum of four (4) years
 - Capture and store data relevant to educator salary and salary growth increments
 - Issue Permits for paraprofessionals, adult education teachers, and others
 - Generate emails to educators
 - House license revocation and suspension status
 - Accept payment for license payment
 - Correspond with educator via email
 - Generate licenses, certificates, and permits
 - Indicate application status, including receipt of required documents and data
 - Designate workflow by activity, for L&C staff
- Allow for the data transfer from the current DEEDS and DPEC
- Include an administrative module that is web-based
- Include both scheduled and ad hoc reporting capabilities
- Interoperability - with DDOE and third party systems such as, but not limited to, the DDOE's Single Sign-on Solution - Information Management System (IMS), Student Information System (PowerSchool - eSchoolPLUS), Human Resource System (PHRST),

Professional Development Management System (PDMS), Educational Testing System (ETS), and National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC).

- Allow limited public access to educator data through inquiry

1.2. Intent of this Request for Information (RFI)

Rather than repeat this work, Delaware would like to transfer an existing system, install an off-the-shelf product, or replicate an approach that has been successful elsewhere, and then enhance it to meet the needs of DDOE, OCCL, and LEAs. It is believed that by leveraging the best practices and technical infrastructure of an existing solution, Delaware will be able to implement a higher quality system than would be possible through custom development, and be able to do so at a reduced cost and in less time. DDOE is looking for applications that will meet the business requirements of the Licensure and Certification (L&C) and the Office of Early Learning (OEL) to assist them in maintaining relevant educator data and issuing all required documentation.

The intent of this RFI is to elicit the advice and best analysis of knowledgeable persons in the vendor community, not to select a proposed solution or a vendor. Subsequently, and incorporating knowledge gained from the response to this RFI, the State intends to prepare and issue a Request for Proposal (RFP) that will meet the requirements of its stakeholders. The collective information provided by vendors will be used to develop alternatives for consideration and to estimate costs related to acquisition of a proposed solution. Vendors may respond to this RFI with information about software applications with the ability to manage educator licensure and certification requirements with flexibility towards future legislative changes.

It must be clearly understood that this RFI is being used as a vehicle to obtain information about existing systems, implementation methods and potential suppliers of implementation services. This RFI should not be interpreted as a contract (implicit, explicit, or implied), nor does it imply any form of an agreement to candidate vendors. This RFI does not create vested contract rights. It is merely solicited for informational purposes. In addition, no inference should be made that the State will adopt or implement in the future any recommendations proposed by the vendors responding to this RFI. The State will, however, use responses to this RFI to build and fine-tune our RFP.

While vendor qualification information may be provided in response to this RFI, only vendor information submitted in response to any eventual RFP will be used to make the vendor selection

No cost associated with responding to this RFI may be charged to the State of Delaware for any reason.

2. Project Overview

2.1. Background

The current Delaware Educator Data System (DEEDS) is almost 20 years old and the Delaware First Professional Development System for Early Childhood (DPEC) is over 10 years old.

DDOE plans to replace these systems, either by transferring to an existing system and modifying it to meet DDOE requirements or by contracting for redevelopment of these systems.

Additionally, the early childhood data is currently stored in the DPEC system, which is separate from DEEDS. This would be an opportunity to merge the two systems into one synergistic system, allowing for one licensure component for birth to 12 and for the seamless transfer of data.

2.2. System Overview

The current DEEDS is an automated tool requiring extensive human interaction. The system assists the DDOE in creating licenses, certificates, and permits for all of its educators including, but not limited to teachers, administrators, paraprofessionals, specialists, adult education teachers, and administrative professionals. Data for each individual includes educational transcripts; professional development documents; in-state, out-of-state, and out-of-country teaching licenses, employment verification documents, and employment history; salary and professional growth status and history; state-awarded stipend history for national certification; professional certification(s); and evaluation data. Future plans would include the opportunity for the educator to view the requirements that must be met to move from an emergency or a certificate of eligibility to a standard certificate. In brief, the DEEDS system is one-stop shopping for all data relevant to each educator.

The current DPEC system is also an automated tool that was built based off of the DEEDS system. The current system is limited in the process management of the early childhood certificates required for the Office of Child Care Licensing (OCCL). OCCL has an agreement with the Office of Early Learning to manage the early childhood certificate process. The current system allows the OEL staff to enter personal information on each individual, educational transcripts, professional development documents, employment verification documents, and their career lattice. Future plans would include the opportunity to merge with the DEEDS system and collect the same information for the early childhood workforce.

The current systems supports the DDOE, LEAs, OCCL, IHEs, and the individual educators themselves. DEEDS allows for public access to an educator's license and certification(s) data and place of employment. Today, the current DEEDS has nearly 80,000 accounts while DPEC has nearly 15,000. The DEEDS system allows educators to view limited data and records and to apply for initial licensure, initial certification, and graduate salary increments. DPEC is still requiring paper applications and the early childhood educators currently do not have access to view their information or their certificates. Eventually, if desired, educators can apply for subsequent certificates, as there is no limit to the number of certificates an educator may earn.

DDOE users can modify applications and upload, view and provide final approval of documents that lead to a license, certificate(s), permits, and graduate salary increments.

LEA users can create applications, modify applications, and upload, view and provide interim approve of documents that lead to a license, certificates, permits, and graduate salary increments.

IHE users can enroll and indicate completion of educators in Alternate Route to Certification (ARTC) programs, upload documents, and view educators.

OCCL users can view the early childhood and school-age center certificates to ensure staff hold the appropriate certificates in licensed facilities reviews.

The key feature and primary focus of the current DEEDS system is the issuance of State documentation to credential educators as required by law and the management of data relevant to each educator. The requirements are identified in a variety of State code and regulation including:

- **Del. C. 14**
(<http://regulations.delaware.gov/AdminCode/title14/index.shtml#TopOfPage>)
- Delaware Administrative Code
(<http://regulations.delaware.gov/AdminCode/title14/index.shtml#TopOfPage>), specifically:
 - Regulation 750 Support Personnel Salary Supplements for Additional Training
(<http://regulations.delaware.gov/AdminCode/title14/700/750.shtml#TopOfPage>)
 - Regulation 284 Licensure and Certification of Public Education Employees in the Department of Education, in Adult Education and in Prison Education Programs Whose Work Responsibilities are Directly Related to Curriculum and Instruction
(<http://regulations.delaware.gov/AdminCode/title14/200/284.shtml>)
- Professional Standards Board “1500” Regulations
(<http://regulations.delaware.gov/AdminCode/title14/1500/index.shtml#TopOfPage>)

Delaware First Professional Development System for Early Childhood and School-Age Programs was designed to certify individuals based off the Delaware: Regulations for Early Care and Education and School-Age Centers. These regulations were established by the Office of Child Care Licensing in the Department of Services for Children, Youth and Their Families. The requirements are identified by the Office of Child Care Licensed including:

- <https://kids.delaware.gov/occl/regs-exempts.shtml>

2.3. Future System Design Objectives

There are three critical design objectives that the Department would like to address as part of this project.

1. **Built for Change** – DEEDS will be designed for flexibility and ease of use, allowing program managers to make changes in response to external requirements and management priorities without the need to use highly technical resources. The system will allow business rules to be changed and workflow to be modified without custom programming.
2. **Inform the Process** – DEEDS will easily respond to the information needs of school, district DOE staff, OCCL, and public Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests, largely without the need for custom reporting and technical analysis. The system will incorporate a ‘Dashboard’ that allows system managers to monitor the performance of the process on a routine basis.
3. **Highly Integrated** – Much of the data needed to support operations and management of licensing and certification comes from outside sources, such as the Student Information System (PowerSchool - eSchoolPLUS), the Human Resource System (PHRST), and other external programs. DEEDS will include reliable and timely interfaces with these systems that permits accurate integration of relevant information about educators and their employment.

Additional outside sources include, but are not limited to, Educational Testing Service (ETS) for standardized test data, Delaware IHEs for student transcripts, and the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) for educator reciprocity and professional educator discipline actions housed in their clearinghouse.

Technology Upgrade

All new systems developed by and for DDOE are developed for the web and support responsive design.

Enhancements

In addition to supporting the details listed in Section 1, DDOE is looking to have a system that is built with modules and can be easily changed and updated through the User Interface and does not require development coding for Legislative changes.

Reliability and Ease of Use

- The ability to batch process local university graduates
- A user-friendly workflow process
- Ability to upload/attach multiple documents and align them to educator accounts
- Have an Apple and Android app that account holders can quickly view the status of their application and view their credentials

User Population, Shared Controls

- For the DDOE Licensure & Certification Workgroup, Higher Education Workgroup, Office of Early Learning, Technology Operations Workgroup, and LEAs
- Public facing web interface that allows anyone to search a current educator and view credentials and certificates
- User-friendly web interface for account holders

Single Sign-On

- Required integration with the current and possible future replacement of the Delaware Department of Education's SSO solution

Accessibility

The new DEEDs application must meet the standards of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as defined by Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 (WCAG 2.0). Information about WCAG 2.0 is available at the W3C website. (<https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG/>).

2.4. Technical Environment

This section describes the technical standards of the DDOE as well as the hardware and software environment in which the new system must operate.

The table below identifies the primary tools and technologies used by the DDOE:

Relational Database	SQL Server 2014 R2
Reporting Service	SQL Server 2014 R2 Reporting Service
Data Warehouse	SQL Server 2014 R2 Analysis Service
ETL Tool	SQL Server 2014 R2 Integration Service
Server Operating Systems	Windows Server 2016 (2012 also supported)
Identify Management	Microsoft Unified Access Gateway Thread Management Gateway Active Directory Federated Services
Preferred Development Tools	Visual Studio 2015
Source and Version Control	Git
Web Browser	Current Versions of (IE, Firefox, Safari, Chrome, Edge)
Office and Email Applications	Microsoft Office 2016/O365

All new systems developed by and for DDOE are developed for the web and support responsive design.

In addition to DDOE standards, all systems must also adhere to State technology and communication standards, located at

<http://dti.delaware.gov/information/standards-policies.shtml>.

3. Request for Information

3.1. Respondent's Organization

1. Please complete the following information regarding your organization's corporate headquarters, local office, and primary contact for any questions pertaining to your organization's response to this RFI.

ORGANIZATION HEADQUARTERS INFORMATION:

Company Name:

Address:

City, State & Zip:

Company Size: (Total Number of Employees)

REGIONAL OR LOCAL OFFICE INFORMATION:

Address:

City, State & Zip:

Primary Contact:

Phone: Fax:

E-mail:

PRIMARY CONTACT INFORMATION RFI:

Name: Title:

Address:

City, State & Zip:

Phone: Fax:

E-mail:

PRIMARY CONTACT INFORMATION RFP:

Name: Title:

Address:

City, State & Zip:

Phone: Fax:

E-mail:

2. At this point in time, do you expect to respond to the State's RFP? If not, please explain why. If you are not willing to respond to the RFP as a prime contractor, would you be willing to work on the project as a subcontractor for a prime contractor? If not, please explain why?
3. The State has a strong preference for using an implementation vendor with a corporate track record of successful project implementation in the K-12 environment. More important is the track record of individuals proposed for its project. Please describe your organization's background in this area.
4. Because it is difficult to provide the "A team" to every client, please describe your approach to providing consultants with the desired project experience in state and local education. Is there anything the State can do to increase the likelihood of getting the most qualified team? What can a vendor do to "lock-in" key personnel for the life of the project?

3.2. Transfer System

5. Based on your review of the Project Overview described in section 2.0, what do you feel are the strengths and weaknesses of this project? What are the major challenges or technical difficulties Delaware could face?
6. Please provide an overview of one or more systems or products you feel would be a candidate for use to Delaware. Describe the characteristics of the candidate that make it a good transfer candidate. Is there anything would make a transfer difficult?
7. For each of the candidates, please describe how well they address each of the design objectives identified in section 2.3 of this RFI.
8. Describe the technologies used to develop and maintain the candidate systems with special emphasis on the tools used in the creation and maintenance of the system
9. Are the identified candidates compatible with the technical environment described in section 2.3 of this RFI? Are there any components of Delaware’s technical environment that you would recommend changing to facilitate the transfer of the system to Delaware?

3.3. Plans and Approach

10. The State’s review of similar projects undertaken by other states has shown it that the duration of the projects varies significantly. Based on your review of the scope of the project and our technical environment, what do you feel is a reasonable time frame, from project implementation kick-off through roll-out of this system?
11. Just as important as the project methodology is the approach to change management. Please provide an overview of your change management approach and describe the features of this approach that provide the greatest benefit to our organization.
12. The State has identified the potential cost of migrating our current application to a new solution as a significant risk to the project. Please describe your experience with different approaches to such migration that can help mitigate this risk.

3.4. Request for Proposal

13. Delaware is planning to award a “fixed-price” contract for implementation services. Please describe what we can do in our RFP to increase the accuracy of your pricing and minimize the need for contract modifications during the implementation project.
14. Below is Delaware’s proposed schedule for the RFP process. Please comment on this schedule and suggest ways that it may be improved.

ID	Milestone	Date
1	Publish Request for Proposal	January 2019
2	RFP Response Due	March 2019
3	Technical and Business Evaluation	April 2019
4	Oral Presentations	April 2019
5	Vendor Selection	May 2019
6	Contract	June 2019
7	Project Start	July 2019

4. Vendor Logistics

4.1. Response Format

Please prepare and submit one hard and one electronic copy of your response using Microsoft Office software. To facilitate a timely and comprehensive analysis of all responses submitted, please utilize the format and numbering presented in this RFI, with the questions repeated and followed by your response. Responses should be prepared simply and economically, providing a straight-forward and concise narrative. Supplemental materials may be provided, but only those directed specifically at the issues contained in this RFI should be submitted.

4.2. Vendor Presentations

The State may elect to schedule meetings with vendors responding to this RFI to receive demonstrations of referenced systems, as well as to solicit additional information and clarification of the information presented. The decision to schedule meetings will be made following review of all RFI responses.

4.3. Proprietary Material

Any information contained in any response to this RFI that the vendor believes is proprietary must be clearly designated as such. Responses declaring the entire RFI response or an entire section proprietary will be neither accepted nor honored and will be rejected. If, after opening all bids in response to the subsequent RFP, a request is made to view any response to this RFI, the State of Delaware will comply with that request pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act. To the extent any information contained in a response to this RFI is marked as proprietary, such information will not be made available to the requestor until the affected vendor has been given an opportunity to provide an appropriate response, however, the State reserves the right under FOIA to disclose any information submitted.

The vendor should clearly identify any materials, which constitute valuable formulae, designs, drawings, or research data or any materials otherwise claimed to be to be confidential trade secrets, along with a citation to the applicable statutory provisions supporting such a claim for confidentiality. Failure to so label materials as such, or failure to respond within ten days of notice of a request for access to materials submitted pursuant to this RFI, may be deemed a waiver by the vendor of any claim that such materials are, in fact, confidential. The State's sole responsibility shall be limited to maintaining the above data in a secure area and to notify any vendor of any request(s) for disclosure as soon as practicable from date of receipt of any such request.